

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8176
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PRETORIA FOR AMEMBASSY CAPETOWN

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, IR, UK, RH
SUBJ: PRESS INTERVIEW WITH JOSHUA N'KOMO

REF: TEHRAN 04260

1. WE HAVE NOW PERUSED PRESS INTERVIEW GIVEN BY N'KOMO PRIOR TO DEPARTURE FROM TEHRAN AIRPORT AND FIND LITTLE OF SPECIAL INTEREST. MOST INTERESTING EXCERPTS ARE THE FOUR EXCHANGES BELOW.
2. N'KOMO WAS UNCOMMUNICATIVE ABOUT RESULTS OF HIS AUDIENCE WITH THE SHAH (REFTEL) BUT TERMED IT "USEFUL AND CONSTRUCTIVE." HE DISSOCIATED HIMSELF PUBLICLY FROM MUGABE'S STATEMENT ABOUT A ONE-PARTY MARXIST REGIME TAKING POWER IN RHODESIA, JUST AS HE APPARENTLY DID PRIVATELY PER REFTEL.

3. EXCERPTS AS FOLLOWS:

A. QUESTION: "HOW WERE THE TALKS YOU HELD IN TEHRAN?"

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ANSWER: "MY TALKS WITH HIS MAJESTY THE SHAHANSHAH WERE VERY USEFUL AND CONSTRUCTIVE. THIS HAS BEEN MY THIRD VISIT TO TEHRAN AND, AS IN THE PAST, MY TALKS WITH THE SHAHANSHAH WERE CONSTRUCTIVE AND POSITIVE. I AM VERY GLAD THAT I CAME TO TEHRAN."

B. QUESTION: "WHAT DO YOU THINK OF A ONE-PARTY MARXIST REGIME TAKING POWER IN RHODESIA, WHICH MUGABE REFERRED TO IN CAIRO LAST WEEK?"

ANSWER: "I AM NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR MUGABE'S STATEMENTS, EVEN THOUGH WE MAY BE LEADING A UNITED FRONT."

C. QUESTION: "IT HAS BEEN REPORTED THAT IAN SMITH WILL PROBABLY ANNOUNCE HIS RETIREMENT SOON. DO YOU BELIEVE THIS?"

ANSWER: "IAN SMITH HAS SAID ALL SORTS OF THINGS SO FAR. ONCE HE SAID HE WOULD NEVER PERMIT A BLACK MAJORITY RULE AS LONG AS HE LIVED. NOW HE SAYS THAT AFTER A CERTAIN TIME THE BLACK MAJORITY WILL ASSUME POWER. WHAT IAN SMITH SAYS MATTERS LITTLE TO ME. WHAT COUNTS IS WHAT THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE HAVE TO SAY. ZIMBABWE IS NOT IAN SMITH'S PRIVATE PROPERTY, YOU KNOW."

D. QUESTION: "WHO IS HELPING THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE AND WHICH POWERS ARE SYMPATHETIC TOWARDS THEM? SOMETIMES WE READ AND HEAR THAT WESTERN COUNTRIES AND LEADERS ARE TRYING TO HELP THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE."

ANSWER: "I DON'T THINK THAT IS THE TRUTH. THE WEST HAS ACTUALLY TRIED TO MAKE THINGS MORE DIFFICULT FOR US. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THEY HAVE ONLY HELPED US UNDERSTAND OUR PROBLEMS BETTER. OF COURSE, THE UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTIONS OR REFUSAL TO RECOGNIZE IAN SMITH'S REGIME OR ANY REGIMES PROPOSED BY HIM ARE HELPFUL. BUT OUR REAL NEEDS ARE OUR NEEDS FOR ARMAMENT IN OUR WAR, WHICH WE ARE REFUSED BY THE WEST AND SO HAVE TO SECURE THEM FROM THE EAST. MUCH IS BEING SAID ABOUT THE PATRIOTIC MOVEMENT BEING INSPIRED BY THE COMMUNIST WORLD, BUT THAT IS NOT TRUE. WE DRAW OUR ONLY INSPIRATION FROM OUR NATIONAL INTERESTS. NOR IS THERE ANY TRUTH TO THE CLAIM THAT THE EAST IS TRYING TO COLONIALIZE US. WE HAVE BEEN ACTUALLY COLONIZED ONCE--BY THE WEST--AND WE HAVE NO USE FOR ITS ADVICE NOW; WE ARE MATURE AND HAVE NEVER BEEN TOLD BY ANY EASTERN BLOC COUNTRY WHAT COURSE WE MUST FOLLOW."

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